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# Record

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## Play provides unique way to share gospel

ORANJESTAD, Aruba (BP) — "The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king," Shakespeare's Hamlet said as he sought to show his uncle's guilt in the death of his father.

Through history, artists have used their creations to carry a message.

That was Stan Owens-Hughes' motive when he wrote, directed, and presented "The Pandushi Girl" for the Aruba National Drama Festival recently.

People who would never come to hear preaching by the

Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionary nevertheless got a good shot of the gospel as they watched his play.

His audiences included those who saw the play during the festival, and a week later nearly 500 students from three of the island nation's high schools.

Each student received a copy of the gospel tract, "The Four Spiritual Laws," translated into Papiamento, the heart language of the island.

"The Pandushi Girl" also was performed in Papiamento.

Owens-Hughes presented a newly translated Papiamento Bible to each of the staff of the theater where the drama was presented and to officials of the Aruba Cultural Institute, which sponsored the festival.

The play tells the story of Alice, who leaves Aruba for New York to study and work.

She says the only thing she misses from her homeland is her grandmother's pandushi (sweet bread).

When Alice returns to Aruba for her grandmother's funeral, however, she remembers her

grandmother's teachings about Jesus.

Finally, she rejects the materialistic, overly ambitious person she has become and turns back to God.

Owens-Hughes, who grew up in Stillwater, Okla., worked with some 20 youth and young adults of a Christian drama group in Oranjestad to present "Pandushi."

Debra, Owens-Hughes' wife, said participation in the drama festival helps her and her husband become known.

"On such a tiny island, we feel like God wants us to be known. When people are going through difficult times, we hope they'll say, 'I could go to them.'"

"They need to know us if we're going to make a change in their lives."

The couple are the only Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries on Aruba, which has a population of 80,000 permanent residents and receives thousands of tourists each year.

The population of the former Dutch colony, close to the

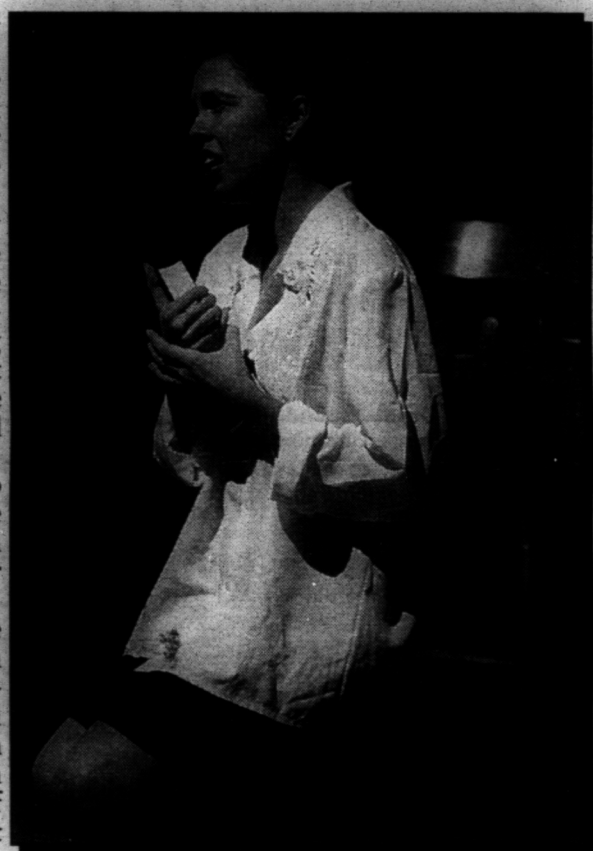
Venezuelan coast just outside the Gulf of Mexico, is about 80% Roman Catholic.

Before the drama festival, "Pandushi" was presented once in a church in Oranjestad.

It might be presented yet again before a theater audience, for videotaping and later broadcasting by the island's main television channel.



FINISHING TOUCH — Lupita Batres (right) gets some cosmetic fine tuning from a fellow performer just before walking onstage in the production of "The Pandushi Girl," an evangelistic play written and directed by missionary Stan Owens-Hughes. (BP photos by Sandy King)



SERIOUS DRAMA — Lupita Batres prays during a presentation of "The Pandushi Girl." "God has helped me play this part," said Batres, the play's leading actress. "and I feel he wants me to work for him."

### WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

WMU holds annual meet

MBIB sets workshop

WMU trademarks 'Annie'

Letters to the Editor

### IDF still alive, contrary to reports

The International Development Foundation (IDF) of the International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS) in Europe is not closing as reported in a recent issue of the Baptist Today periodical. Victor N. Varner, IDF president, said he was shocked to read in Baptist Today that the foundation was closing and that he had retired.

"Quite the contrary is true — the foundation is alive. The Baptist Today story results from misinterpreting actions of the IBTS board of trustees. It is true that IBTS trustees voted... to close the U.S. Development Office and discontinue the position of vice-president for development until further clarification of the seminary's new directions," he said.

However, IDF is an independent organization established to support Baptist theological education within the European Baptist Federation and remains open for business, Varner stressed.

"The number of people desiring to enroll in seminary far exceeds available resources. This is where (IDF) can and must make a difference in Europe, particularly in central and eastern Europe, by making it possible for called individuals to receive the ministerial training and preparations they need," he said.

For more information, contact IDF at 9660 Hillcroft, Suite 326, Houston, TX 77096

### Looking back

#### 10 years ago

Hollis and Eunice Bryant of Clinton are honored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board during a meeting in Kansas City. Hollis was named state Interfaith Witness Coordinator of the Year, and Eunice was named Interfaith Witness Associate of the Year.

#### 25 years ago

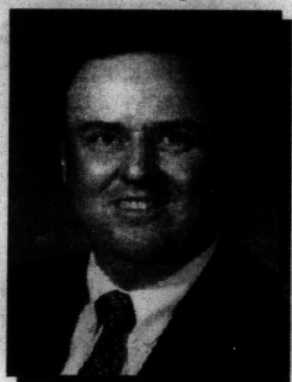
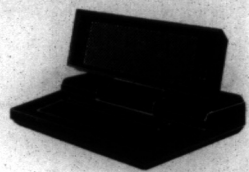
Lee Association churches equip a 40-foot moving van to serve as a mobile disaster relief vehicle for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Disaster Relief Unit. The van is a self-contained unit housing a trained six-man team of disaster workers.

#### 50 years ago

Dorothy Lee Jefferson is named Student Secretary for Delta State University in Cleveland. Charles Treadway, pastor of First Church, Cleveland, says: "We are more than pleased with her, for she has taken hold of things with a bang, and the students like her very much."



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# A powerful force for change

Anyone who missed the serial entitled, "The Preacher and the Klansman," in The Clarion-Ledger newspaper earlier this month missed a captivating story of good and evil, love and hate, played out in our own home state. It is the stuff of which history is made.

"The Preacher and the Klansman," written by The Clarion-Ledger reporter Jerry Mitchell, is the novelized but true story of two men who came of age in the civil rights era — the most wrenching, violent time in Mississippi history since the Civil War.

John Perkins grew up a poor African-American child in south Mississippi who always yearned to know his absent father. Tommy Tarrants grew up white and middle class in Mobile, Ala., yearning to understand his present but alcoholic father.

Victimized and embittered by the racial atmosphere of Mississippi — including the loss of a beloved brother cut down for almost no reason by a white town marshal — Perkins left Mississippi for California.

Disaffected and drifting, Tarrants came under the spell of Sam Bowers, the alleged leader of a Ku Klux Klan sect based in Laurel.

It was in California that Perkins found Jesus as his personal Lord and Savior. He was soon struggling with God's clear and powerful call to return to Mississippi and begin a life of Christian ministry.

When Perkins finally returned to Mississippi, he was drawn deeper and deeper into the civil rights movement, based on his religious convictions.

As the young Tarrants was being drawn deeper and deeper into the dark, terrorist world of the Klan, he too was convinced of the rightness of his cause, based on his religious convictions.

Perkins endured many beatings over the next several years. He had a fork thrust

into his nostrils. He had guns placed against his head and triggers pulled.

Still Perkins remained faithful to the cause. So did Tarrants.

As he carried a bomb up the driveway of a Meridian Jewish leader's house in the stillness of an east Mississippi night, police opened fire on Tarrants from their concealed surveillance points.

Hiding in shrubbery and struggling for every breath as his life bled away, Tarrants was pulled from his hiding place and shot again while prone on the ground. It was a miracle he survived to serve his criminal sentence in the Mississippi State Penitentiary.

It was in Parchman that Tarrants discovered the real Christ and rejected the twisted version espoused by the Klan.

Today, John Perkins is one of the most respected religious leaders in the state. Tommy Tarrants is a minister in Washington, D.C.

The two men were recently brought together for the first time.

Forgiveness in Christ was asked, and forgiveness in Christ was granted. In that happy ending lies the easily-overlooked element of this powerful story.

There is only one force in the universe that could have kept one man true to his call, and convinced another man of his loss. There is only one force that could have saved both men from an eternity of darkness.

"THIS IS YOUR GREAT-  
GRANDFATHER.  
HE WAS QUITE A MAN —  
BECAUSE HE  
SERVED QUITE A  
LORD!"



That powerful force for change is Jesus Christ. He is alive, and he is changing people's lives every day as he has for the past 2,000 years.

John Perkins and Tommy Tarrants are clear evidence of that.

If he changed them, he can change you. He stands patiently at your door (Rev. 3:20). Isn't it time you let him in?

## A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE:

*A room full  
of ordinary people*

By Carl M. White, Associate Editor



If you ever meet Lewis Myers, you will remember him. He has the kind of contagious smile and warm personality that makes a person want to know him better and speak to him again.

Lewis is a Mississippian, born in Skeen and educated at Mississippi College. I heard of him for many years before I actually met him.

Fresh out of Southern Seminary, the eager new pastor of First Church, Sumner, in Tallahatchie County had the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) circle named for Toni Myers, Lewis' wife.

The Myerses pastored First Church, Sumner, some years before I arrived on the scene.

They had eventually gone to Vietnam as missionaries with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, and were living legends in the white-columned church along Cassady Bayou in Sumner.

After the fall of Vietnam, Myers landed in the administration at the Foreign Mission Board — now International Mission Board (IMB) — eventually being named Vice President for World A Strategies.

That puts this well-mannered Mississippian on the cutting edge of international missions, for World A is what IMB president Jerry Rankin (also a Mississippian) calls "The Last Frontier," the remaining people groups in the world that need to hear about Jesus.

At the annual WMU convention in Hattiesburg last week Lewis spoke, and I found myself drawn to his every word.

Maybe it was because he is a Mississippian, as I have recently developed a real interest in how God has raised up men and women from Mississippi to lead the world in missions and evangelism.

Maybe it was because I have heard about Lewis Myers since

my first days in the pastorate at Sumner, and grew to love and appreciate him long before I ever had to opportunity to know him.

Most likely, it was because he had something to say. From the heart of this man came a challenge to which Mississippi Baptists are apt to respond.

Myers said he has looked many of the national leaders of World A in the eye and said, "Tell me what you need and I can find a Southern Baptist to meet that need."

Myers seems to believe that from a group like those gathered for the annual WMU convention, resources can be found to change the world.

What a challenge! As he spoke I looked across

the near-capacity crowd at First Church, Hattiesburg. I saw Mississippi women, mostly wives and mothers, from big and little churches all over the state.

At first I thought, "Can the needs of the world be met from places like Skeen and Boyle?"

Then I looked at Lewis behind the pulpit and at his wife, Toni, seated in the congregation. Tears filled my eyes.

God has done it before, why not again?

My eyes scanned the congregation another time, and I saw several missionary parents, a retired missionary couple, the head of WMU at a county seat church, a young mother who works with GAs at one of our choice country churches, and dozens of others I did not know.

Suddenly the Holy Spirit seemed to fill the room and for a moment I saw our state WMU as only the eyes of faith can see.

Yes! It can be done.

God can take a room full of ordinary people and accomplish extraordinary things.

Thank you, Lewis Myers, for a moving challenge. What a mighty God we serve!



# Family expert Dobson to close SBC annual meeting

SALT LAKE CITY (BP and local reports) — James C. Dobson, president of Focus on the Family in Colorado Springs, Co., will bring the concluding message for the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in Salt Lake City June 9-11.

Dobson's appearance on the SBC program adds strength to the 141st session of the nation's largest evangelical body.

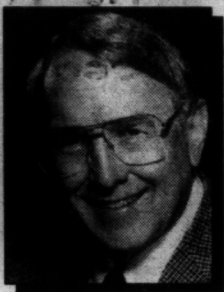
The meeting is in the Utah capital's Salt Palace Convention Center, across the street from the Mormon Temple.

Utah is the headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and some opposition to Southern Baptist evangelism efforts is expected.

The annual meeting will be preceded by a number of satellite events, such as the annual meeting of the national Woman's Missionary Union and the SBC Pastor's Conference.

One earlier event is an evangelistic emphasis, called Crossover Salt Lake City, which occurs in each city where the annual meeting is held.

Longtime Utah religious observers say it will be the first time a large door-to-door wit-



Dobson

nessing campaign by a group the size of the SBC will be held in Salt Lake City, noting the door-to-door witnessing is a strategy often used by Mormons in other cities around the country.

Other highlights of the annual meeting include mission emphasis nights with the North American Mission Board's presentation on Tuesday night and the International Mission Board highlighting international missions on Wednesday night.

Also, highlighting the music portion of the annual meeting will be The Singing Churchmen of Oklahoma, a group of more than 280 ministers of music in that state, and the Oklahoma

Baptist Symphony, with more than 60 musicians from Southern Baptist churches in Oklahoma.

Messengers also will hear reports from the various SBC entities and vote on several business items and resolutions, according to Rick E. Ferguson, pastor of Riverside Church, Denver, and chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business.

A new SBC president will also be elected.

THE  
SECOND  
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST  
*Record*

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## WMU convention hears Blackaby, Myers

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Over 1,000 members of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), pastors, directors of missions, current and retired missionaries, and missionary parents gathered at Hattiesburg's First Church for the 119th annual meeting of the Mississippi WMU, according to Marjean Patterson, WMU executive director/treasurer.



LEADERS GATHER — Together at the 1998 Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) convention in Hattiesburg were (from left) Dean Register, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and pastor of Temple Church, Hattiesburg; Marjean Patterson, Mississippi WMU executive director-treasurer; and Rebecca Williams, Mississippi WMU president. (Photo by Carl M. White)

They heard reports of mission work from dozens of churches across the state, as well as messages from Henry Blackaby of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), Lewis Myers of the International Mission Board (IMB) and Dellanna O'Brien, president of the national WMU.

Rebecca Williams of Gautier was reelected to her second year as president of the Mississippi WMU. Roberta Johnston of Brookhaven was elected vice-president and Kay Hodge of Hernando was elected recording secretary.

There was also a moving report of the successful eye surgery performed on Syrelis de Rivas, the three-year-old daughter of Venezuelan pastor Samuel de Revas of Maracaibo, Venezuela.

The campers at Camp Garaywa last summer dedicated half of their summer mission offering to pay for the corrective surgery for Syrelis, according to Jan Cossitt, Mississippi WMU consultant.

The surgery, which would have cost over \$15,000 in the United States, cost only \$1,500 in Venezuela. The campers gave enough money to pay for the surgery and to bring Syrelis and her mother to Mississippi.

According to Cossitt, the de Rivas family is very poor and the sudden appearance of money in their account raised suspicions with the government, who canceled their visas. Unable to resolve the situation in time to bring them to the state for the WMU convention, plans are now underway to bring Syrelis and her family to Camp Garaywa this summer.

Blackaby, special assistant to the NAMB president and the author of "Experiencing God," encouraged WMU to not pull back.

"I've never known a people who pray like WMU people pray," Blackaby said to the near capacity crowd filling the sanctuary.

"Like Jesus, there may be a time when we would want to pray, 'Father save me from this hour,' but like Jesus, we hope to hear the Father say, 'I sent you for this hour,'" Blackaby said.

Myers, a native of Sken and former missionary to Vietnam, said "we are the resources that God has equipped and placed in the world to take the Gospel message."

Myers is IMB vice-president for World A Strategies and interim regional director for Central and Southern Asia.

"World A is God's great gift to the laity," Myers said.

World A is the term used for the 1.7 billion people in 2,141 people groups who have never heard the Gospel. IMB is attempting to redirect resources toward World A, referring to it as the "Last Frontier."

"Us preacher-types can't get in there, but those of you who are skilled in education, engineering, or a dozen other areas, would be received with open arms," he indicated.

Myers said he has been able to look world leaders in the eye and say, "if you will tell us what you need in your country's development and are willing to let a

foreigner help, I can find you someone who can do it. We have Southern Baptists who can do anything."

"Twenty thousand volunteers last year were not enough" to accomplish the task, Myers said. "It is going to take all 16 million of us."

O'Brien, executive director of the national WMU, told the convention, "You are the experts, the ones who can write the book on volunteerism."

She then presented her beatitudes for the volunteer. "These are not inerrant," she said. "These not even inspired, but each is self-evident."

"Blessed is the volunteer, for you shall be the love of Christ in action."

"Blessed is the volunteer, for you shall become addicted to the service of others."

"Blessed is the volunteer, for you shall meet truly great people, both those going with you to serve and those you serve."

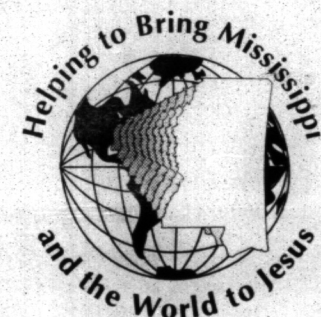
"Blessed is the volunteer, for you shall recognize the value of time."

"Blessed is the volunteer, for you shall never be paid, at least not here on earth."

"Blessed is the volunteer, for you shall inspire others to action, for volunteerism is contagious."

"Blessed is the volunteer, for you shall be pumped up."

The 1999 State WMU Convention will be held March 15-16, 1999, at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

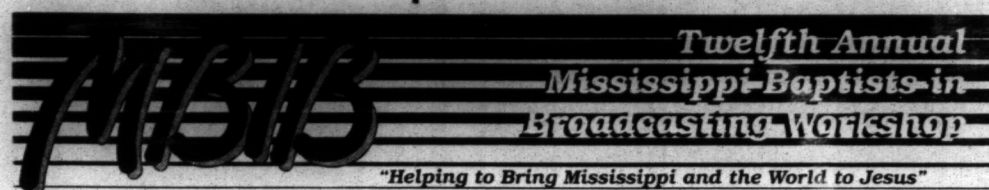


DRAMATIC MOMENT — The Ultimate Power Source drama team from the William Carey College Baptist Student Union presented a theme interpretation for the 1998 Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union convention at First Church, Hattiesburg. Members of the team include (from left) Geannie Miller, Todd Cole, and Laela Syphurs. (Photo by Carl M. White)



# Annual MBIB Workshop set for April 17-18

The 12th annual Mississippi Baptists in Broadcasting (MBIB) Workshop will be held April 17-18 at Calvary Church, Jackson, according to Farrell Blankenship, director of broadcast services for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.



"Mississippi Baptists who are involved in broadcasting on radio, television or cable — and those who are interested in getting started — are invited to join us for the workshop," Blankenship said.

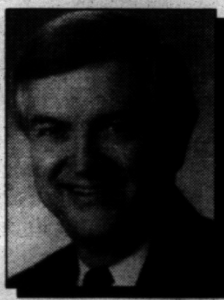
The evening of April 17 will kick off the workshop with a 7 p.m. awards banquet. Ron Harris, executive vice president and chief executive officer for Criswell Communications in Dallas, will be the featured speaker and will also lead a Saturday workshop entitled, "Producing a Worship Service."

Harris' credits include producer/director of the ACTS network's "Invitation to Life," and producer/director for seven years for the "ACTS Awards" live telecast.

He created and hosted an award-winning talk/variety program, "First Things First," which aired nationally in syndication. For over 20 years, Harris has served as both a minister of music and minister of media for churches in Fort Worth, Wichita Falls, and Dallas.

Awards in radio and television to be presented at the banquet include:

- ♦ Best Program for Missions/Evangelism.
- ♦ Church Musical & Community Service.



Harris

- ♦ Best Spot.
  - ♦ Best First Time Entry.
- Judges will also announce one overall award for Creative Use of Radio or Television.

A special audio/video feature of the programs submitted by the awards winners will be presented by the MBIB judging committee.

The agenda for April 18 features workshops and equipment displays by vendors, beginning at 8 a.m. and adjourning at 3:15 p.m.

A continental breakfast will be served by Calvary Church at 8 a.m., and equipment vendors will be available for discussions.

The workshops that will get underway at 9:30 a.m. include:

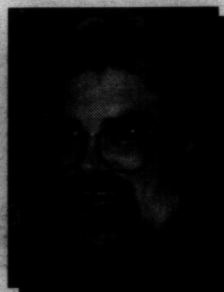
- ♦ "Shooting and Editing with the Single Camera," led by Steve Guidry, chief executive officer of Video Works, Inc., a Jackson TV production firm; and Ken Sims, video and audio consultant for Mission Service Supply.

- ♦ "Basic Audio in the Church," led by David Edmonds, vice president and co-owner of Sound and Communications, Inc., in Jackson; and Tony Brooks, senior audio engineer for First Church, Jackson.

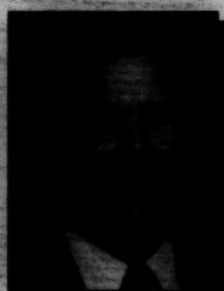
- ♦ "Emerging Technology for the Local Church," led by Glenn McEowen, technical operations manager of the Media



Guidry



Sims



Edmonds

Technology Team, at the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board in Atlanta.

- ♦ "Program Production (Other Than Worship)," and "Producing Outreach Videos and Spots," led by Wayne Pierce, minister of media at First Church, Hattiesburg.

Registration fee for the full workshop is \$25 per person, which includes three meals and conference materials.

For churches that bring four or more persons to the full workshop, the cost is \$20 per person.

For those attending April 17 only or April 18 only, the cost is \$15 per person.

Advance registrations must be made by April 8. Registration fees may be mailed to Farrell Blankenship, MBIB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

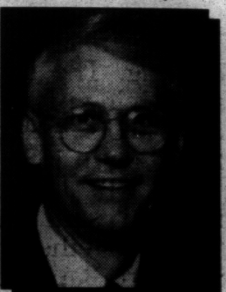
Make checks payable to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

MBIB planning committee members working with Blankenship include Wayne Pierce, Hattiesburg; Bruce Cole, Bruce; Merle Guyton, Tupelo; and Steve Guidry, George Van Horn, Ken Sims, Richard Lister, and Judy Chen, all of Jackson.

For more information, contact Blankenship at the above address, or telephone: (601) 292-3378 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Pierce



McEowen



Edmonds

## Baptists urged to answer call for food to N. Korea

By Tim Nicholas  
MBCB Communication Director

Mississippi Baptists again are being asked to participate in a mission project that once before helped feed hungry people in North Korea.

That project in late 1996 gathered nearly 52 tons of food from Mississippi Baptists, which went to alleviate severe crop shortages in North Korea.

This time, Southern Baptists across the nation are being challenged to gather more than three million pounds of staples because food supplies in North Korea are still short.

This food will be collected by state Baptist conventions and placed on the Evangeline, an ocean-going vessel operated by Feed the Hungry, a Christian relief organization.

Because the ship will be sailing out of New Orleans to North Korea on April 29, the project is a rush job.

Paul Harrell, director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Brotherhood Department, said that packages of food

will be collected at four sites on the following dates:

- April 13 at North Central Association, 1045 Fairfield Avenue, Grenada, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
- April 14 at the warehouse on 803 9th Street South, Columbus (cross railroad track on 9th Street South — the beige building on the left), 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
- April 14 at 38th Avenue Church, 419 North 38th Avenue, Hattiesburg, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
- April 15-17 at the Baptist Building at 515 Mississippi Street in Jackson, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force members will be on hand at each drop point to load trucks and then load the 48-foot trailer in Jackson which will be taken to New Orleans.

Each box is required to have certain foodstuffs and be of a particular size as noted in the accompanying illustration and list.

Each box should have dried beans, corn meal, flour, spaghetti, rice, and powdered milk.

Several stipulations are made by Southern Baptist relief leaders: Try to purchase U.S. products. Do not buy South Korean products. Food may be purchased in bulk and repackaged in zip-lock storage bags.

Make no substitutions. It is requested that donors do not pour loose beans into the boxes.

Each box will have a label that states, "Southern Baptists in America's Love Gift to North Korea." Do not write on the box.

Do not include tracts or other printed materials in shipments — doing so could jeopardize this ministry.

A Baptist observer who spent three months in North Korea said the people did receive the previous shipments and were aware that Southern Baptists were providing the help.

In addition to the goal of 45,000 boxes of food, Southern Baptist World Hunger funds will be used to purchase and send 750,000 pounds of dehydrated soup mix valued at approximately \$600,000.

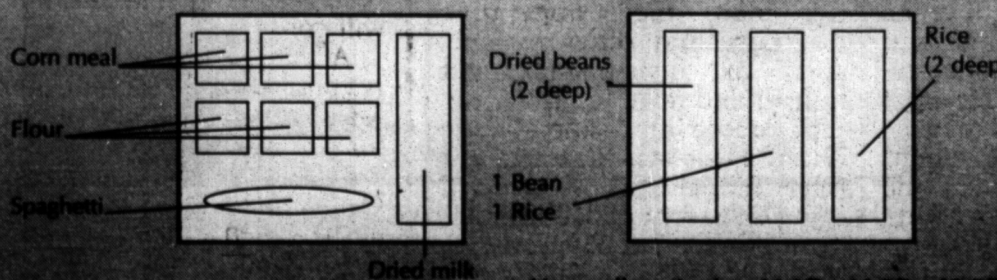
Those unable to prepare boxes may help underwrite shipping expenses by writing Southern Baptist World Hunger Relief, Office of Finance, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

For more information on the project, contact the Mississippi Baptist Brotherhood Department at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

### FOOD RELIEF FOR NORTH KOREA FOOD BOX PACKING SPECIFICATIONS

ITEM	SIZE	QUANTITY
Dried beans	2 or 4 lb. bag	12 lbs. (3-6 bags depending on size of bag)
Corn meal	5 lb. bag	15 lbs. (3 bags)
Flour	5 lb. bag	15 lbs. (3 bags)
Spaghetti	1, 3, or 5 lb. pack	6-10 lbs. (depending on available space)
Rice	5 lb. bag	15 lbs. (3 bags)
Powdered milk	20 qt. box	1 box (bulk or qt.-size envelopes)

Approximate cost: Food — \$40 Box — \$1.70 Total — \$41.70



Use small moving box 16 3/8 x 12 5/8 x 12 5/8 (1.5 cubic feet with weight rating of 65# lbs.)



# WMU to trademark, license AAEO to NAMB

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (AAEO) will become a trademark of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) of the Southern Baptist Convention, and all funds raised through the offering will continue to be used exclusively for work of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) under an agreement between the two mission organizations.

Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, said registering the trademark is important "because it formalizes WMU's relationship with the offering. The support of mission giving has been at the core of WMU's existence since its founding in 1888."

NAMB President Bob Reccord said the agreement "binds together these two great Southern Baptist missions entities, and assures Southern Baptists that when they give to Annie Armstrong, they give directly to the support of God-called men and women on mission in North America."

The national offering to support Southern Baptist missions work in the United States was initiated in 1895 by Annie Armstrong, WMU's first corresponding secretary.

The offering was named in her honor in 1934. Nearly \$700 million has been given to the offering since its inception.

The trademark agreement is similar to an existing agreement between WMU and the Southern Baptist International Mission Board regarding the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Ownership of the offerings

became an issue in recent years because of a broadened array of options for missions giving in Southern Baptist churches.

Leaders want to ensure that offerings raised under the two names is used exclusively for Southern Baptists' two official missions agencies.

Every dollar raised through the offering must be used solely for direct missions work in North America, according to the agree-

ment between the two agencies.

"Southern Baptists have always been assured that every penny of the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering went to support missionaries and their field work," O'Brien said.

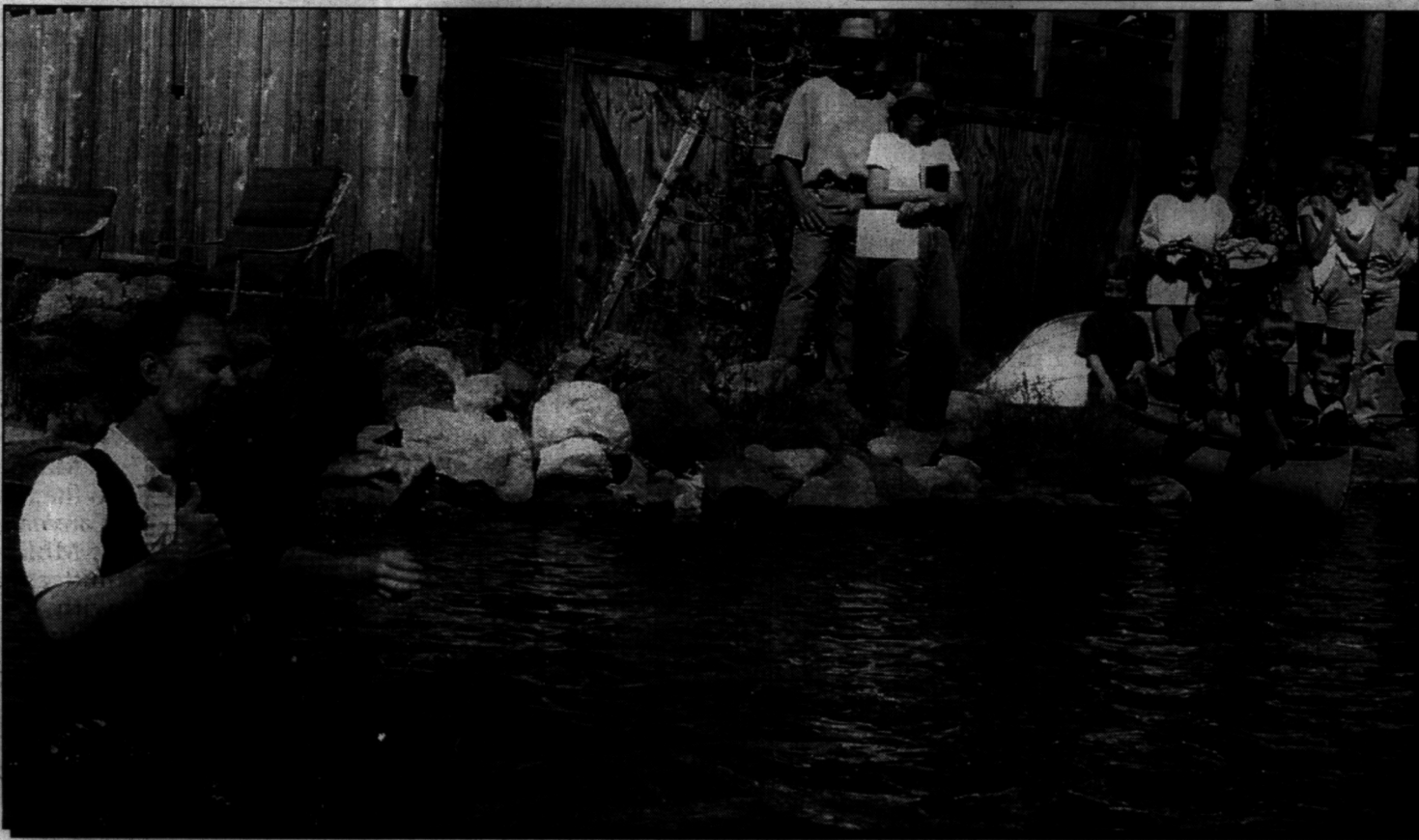
Reccord said, "WMU has been excellent to work with in finalizing this agreement. I appreciate Dr. O'Brien's leadership in bringing this issue to such a satisfactory conclusion."



**Start Something New**

MINISTRY

**Annie Armstrong  
Easter Offering  
National Goal:  
\$42 million**



**'COOL' BAPTISM** — Caitlyn Schwind, age eight, is baptized by Fred Weatherley in the chilly waters of Lake Mary near Mammoth Lakes, Calif., as family and friends look on from the lake bank. Weatherley is one of the many North American Mission Board (NAMB) missionaries supported by the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, which the Southern Baptist Woman's missionary Union and NAMB have sought to protect by completing the legal trademark recognition process. (Photo by Mark Wyatt)

## Largest-ever increase in Lottie offering likely prospect

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Southern Baptists have given the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for international missions its largest dollar increase in history, according to a forecast released March 11 by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in Richmond.

Lottie Moon receipts are expected to total \$102.6 million when the books close in May, surpassing \$100 million for the first time in history.

That would be the offering's fifth straight record year — and an increase from 1996 of \$9.5 million, about 10%.

That's the highest percentage increase since 1988.

"This phenomenal level of giving reflects the priority of Southern Baptists to be on mission with God around the world," said IMB President Jerry Rankin, a native Mississippian.

The entire offering will support the board's overseas budget and, if the forecast holds, would be the first time in the past 16 offerings that Southern Baptists surpassed their goal.

The goal has remained at \$100

million for the last three years.

"These resources will allow us to be effectively involved in the accelerating harvest," Rankin said.

"We praise God for his faithfulness... We can press forward in reaching the last frontier of fulfilling the Great Commission with strategies that will impact every nation and people group," he added.

The yearly forecast — historically very accurate — is based in part on data from selected state Baptist conventions.

All show an increase in Lottie Moon giving this year. If the forecast proves accurate, Lottie Moon receipts will have increased by \$19.7 million — nearly a fourth — since 1993.

The 1997 offering would bring the cumulative total of Lottie Moon receipts to nearly \$1.8 billion, on target to exceed \$2 billion by Christmas 2000.

That cumulative total hit \$1 billion only nine years ago as the 1988 offering filtered in from churches.

Modern technologies and reports by volunteers traveling

to and from mission fields have increased available information about unreached people groups in the world, present(ing) the challenge to Christians to be personally involved in missions through giving, praying and going, said Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Southern Baptists' Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) in Birmingham.

"We rejoice in the faithfulness of Southern Baptists," she said.

WMU started the annual missions offering 110 years ago.

"We are constantly in awe of God's activity in the difficult places of the world," added O'Brien, a former International Mission Board (IMB) missionary to Indonesia for eight years.

"The large offering will make it possible for more people groups to know of his great love," she said.

This year's offering would provide \$94.5 million to the board's overseas operating budget and \$5.5 million for missionary capital funds, which pay for such things as housing and cars on the field.

The boost in capital funds is badly needed, as spiraling costs overseas have required more and more of the board's budget to pay for missionary support, Rankin said.

How to use a \$2.6 million excess over the goal would be determined by trustees after the books close.

"Exceeding the goal catapults us into the 21st century of missions advance," Rankin said.

The offering, generally collected in churches during December, should fund nearly half (47%) of this year's budget of \$210.8 million.

The rest will come from Southern Baptists' unified giving plan, the Cooperative Program, and other income, such as investments and hunger and relief receipts.

For more information on the Lottie Christmas Offering for International Missions, contact the Mississippi WMU department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

## Pair to contest Pastor's Conf. presidency

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — At least two high-profile pastors will vie for president of the annual Pastors' Conference, prior to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) meeting in Salt Lake City in June.

Mike Hamlet, pastor of First Church, North Spartanburg, S.C., will be nominated for president while Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, Tenn., told Baptist Press he has been asked to be nominated and it is likely he will consent.

A third potential candidate is considering the nomination. Rick Warren, high-profile pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church, Lake Forest, Calif., told Baptist Press he has been asked but hasn't yet decided.

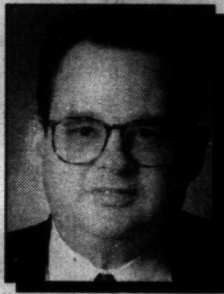


## NAMES IN THE NEWS



**Billy "Mac" Ables Jr.** was ordained to the ministry by Antioch Church, Holmes County, on Feb. 15. Antioch Church is over 100 years old. As far back as church records could be searched, there is no record found that a minister had ever been ordained in Antioch Church. Mac Massey of Brookhaven was in charge of the ordination service. Pictured with Ables is his parents, Billy Mac Ables Sr. and Sandra Ables.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — **L u i s Aranguren**, manager of the leadership development section in the **S u n d a y S c h o o l B o a r d ' s** Multicultural Leadership



Aranguren

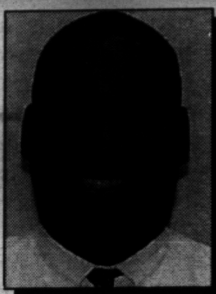
Department, has been named director of a new international department. Aranguren, 50, joined the board in 1996 after serving as associate pastor of education and administration at Primera Iglesia Bautista de Coral Park in Miami. Earlier, he held management positions with Pillsbury Company in the United States and South America.

**John Wells**, minister of music for 10 years serving in Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas, has entered into full time music evangelism. Wells is available for revivals, concerts, conferences, and retreats. He can be reached at 517 Harmony Road, Crystal Springs, MS 39059, or call (601) 892-0177.



Wells

**J a r v i s Ward**, former executive director of Mission Mississippi, will join Mission America on May 15 as one of three national facili-



Ward

tators of city/community ministries. Mission America, through its Celebrate Jesus 2000 evangelism initiative, has a goal of reaching every person in America with the Gospel in the next three years. For information on Mission America and Ward's ministry, contact him at 815 Boston Road, Pearl, MS 39208. Telephone: (601) 932-4522.



**Benjimen Jason Sessums** was ordained to the ministry by Good Hope Church, Lena, on Mar. 8. He was also licensed by the church on Jan. 11. Sessums is available for pulpit supply. He can be contacted at 2861 Pleasant Hill Rd., Lena, MS 39094, or call (601) 654-3434. Pictured (from left) with Sessums is Jessie Napp, pastor.

## REVIVAL DATES

**Pelahatchie (Rankin):** March 29-April 1; Sunday, 11 a.m., followed by lunch, and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Charles E. Smith, Jr., Duncan, evangelist; Steve Walker, Pinola, music evangelist; Michael Glenn, pastor.

**West McComb (Pike):** March 29-April 1; Sunday, Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m. Bruce Gill, Albany, La., evangelist; Joe Elliott, music; Mike Pennock, pastor.

**Griffith Memorial, Jackson:** March 29-April 1; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Larry Hill, Red Bay, Ala., evangelist; Bill Herman, Petal, music; Bruce Cappleman, pastor.

**Bethlehem, Morton:** March 26-29; Thurs.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.; David Miller, Hebron Springs, Ark., evangelist; Johnny Beaver, pastor.

**Tylertown (Walthall):** March 29-April 1; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Jerry Mixon, Lucedale, evangelist; Hugh Plunkett, Clarksdale, music; David L. Sellers, pastor.

**Utica (Metro):** April 3-5, 7 p.m.; Sam Simmons, evangelist; Judy Walker, music; John Snell, pastor.

**Southside, Yazoo City:** March 27-29, Fri.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun. 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Jeffery Parker, Jackson, evangelist; Terry Busby, chaplain, Baptist Children's Village, music; H. Bryan Abel, pastor.

## HOMEcomings

**Plainway, Laurel:** April 5; 11 a.m.; noon meal in fellowship hall; Jim Bryant, Laurel, guest speaker; Randy McLeod, Laurel, music; revival services will be held at 7 p.m. each evening, April 5-8; Kent W. Megehee, pastor.

**Beulah (Newton):** March 27-29; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 10:50 a.m., fellowship meal following services, and 5:50 p.m.; David Rives, Newton, evangelist; Jimmy Thornhill, music; Byron Howell, pastor.

## Highland, Laurel announces revival services will continue

Bart Terry, associate pastor for education and administration at Highland Church, Laurel, has announced that the Find Me Faithful crusade at the church will continue indefinitely. The revival began February 1 and is now in its seventh week. Pastor Dennis Sewell previously announced that services would cease at the end of March. However, due to large crowds continuing to attend and the number of decisions being registered, the decision was made to continue. As of March 17, there have been 917 professions of faith and the church has baptized 381 people, according to Terry. Services are Sunday through Friday at 7 p.m.

## Sexual crimes checks available

Churches and associations in cooperative relationship with the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) can now check for sexual criminal history of volunteers and staff members through the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC).

Mississippi Attorney Mike Moore has granted permission for Paul G. Jones II, CAC executive director, to act on behalf of MBC in securing sexual criminal record verification through the Mississippi Criminal Investigation Bureau.

Churches and associations desiring to conduct the sexual criminal history searches should contact Jones for instructions and approved forms at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Any person for whom a sexual criminal history search is being conducted must complete and sign a release granting permission for the search.

## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

**Mississippi College Department of Music** will present Nell Adams, mezzo-soprano, in a faculty voice recital on April 2. The recital is scheduled for 8:15 p.m. in Aven Auditorium. For additional information call 925-3440.


**Mississippi College** in cooperation with the Ridgeland Public Library is offering "Effective Professional Business Skills," March 30-May 4. For registration information call the Office of Continuing Education at (601) 925-3301.

**Mississippi College Department of Music** will present Tracy Pace of Bentonia and Carrie Stevens of Meridian in their senior voice recitals on March 31 at 4 p.m. in Aven Auditorium. Both Pace and Stevens are students of Chandler Thompson, assistant professor of music. For additional information call (601) 925-3440.

An exhibit of artworks by members of Shekinah, the Mississippi Association of Religious Artists, entitled "He is

Risen" will be on display in the Lucile Parker Gallery at William Carey College. The opening reception honoring the artists will be April 2 from 5-6:30 p.m. The exhibit, which will hang through April 24, can be viewed during the regular gallery hours, 1-4 p.m., Mon.-Fri., or by appointment, call (601) 582-6192.

**Mississippi College** is offering an advanced photography class, March 30-April 27. The class will meet each Monday evening for five weeks. For registration information call the Office of Continuing Education at (601) 925-3301.

 Custom Church Interiors, Inc.

### PEWS

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Stain Glass • Carpet • Lights  
Painting • Baptisries • Steeples  
Complete Renovations

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ALL SIZES  
SALES AND RENTALS



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

March 26, 1998

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## Urgent! Your Help Needed

Over the years thousands of teenagers across our state have signed TLW commitment cards pledging to wait until marriage for sex. This year, along with the national report that will be made on April 14 to the President, Mississippi Youth Ministers will be making reports to the Governor and legislators. The problem is this year very few school organizations and churches have made reports to True Love Waits Headquarters.

Please help by completing the form below and returning it to:

True Love Waits  
MSN 152  
The Sunday School Board  
127 Ninth Avenue, North  
Nashville, TN 37234-0152

Date of Display \_\_\_\_\_ School Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of True Love Waits Cards Displayed \_\_\_\_\_  
Total number of current members who have made a  
commitment to TLW pledge \_\_\_\_\_

## LAD/CRUSADER DAY 1998

Central Hills Baptist Retreat

May 2

9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Cost: \$3.50

Bring a sack lunch.

Register early because the  
deadline is April 27.

For more information, call the Brotherhood Department  
at 1-800-748-1651.



## MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE ON PREACHING AND WORSHIP Crossgates Baptist Church, Brandon May 11-12, 1998

featuring



Argile Smith



Perry Sanders



Chuck Pourciau



Tony  
Higginbotham



Frank Lewis



Dot Pray

Sponsored by the  
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION-PASTORAL MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

## Super Summer '98

July 20-24

Mississippi College, Clinton

with  
Rick Caldwell

# TIME 2

Tell Stand Share  
Unite Go Lead  
Make a Difference

For more information, call the Discipleship and Family Ministry  
Department at 1-800-748-1651.



## Church Facilities

### Workshop

**April 14, 1998**  
**8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
**Parkway Baptist Church**  
**802 North Frontage Road**  
**Clinton, Mississippi**  
**924-9912**

#### Workshop Aspects:

- ◆ Conferences involving every aspect of church facility and program needs
- ◆ Consultation with conference leaders available upon request
- ◆ Vendors will showcase their church services and furnishings
- ◆ Representative from Church Architecture Department of the Sunday School Board will be present

#### Issues to be Dealt With in Conferences:

- ◆ Church Growth Issues
- ◆ Legal Issues
- ◆ Space (worship, education, childcare, recreation, fellowship, and multi-purpose)
  - ◆ Interior Design and Furnishings
  - ◆ Renovation and Maintenance
  - ◆ Construction Issues and Costs
- ◆ Finances (banks, bonds and stewardship campaigns)
  - ◆ Architect and Design Team
  - ◆ Acoustics and Sound Systems



Jeff & Debbie McElroy

## Family's Legacy of Love

**July 4-8, 1998**

**Gulfshore Baptist Assembly**  
**featuring Jeff & Debbie McElroy**

For registration form and brochure, call the Discipleship & Family Ministry Department at 1-800-748-1651.

## 1998 GA SUMMER CAMP DATES

June 1-5	GA's grades 1 and 2	If you are interested in attending camp or bringing a group, call the WMU Dept. at 1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 for more information.
June 8-12	Mother/Daughter	
June 15-19	Overnight:	
June 22-26	June 19-20	
June 29-July 3	GA's grades 1-6	
July 6-10	Mother/Daughter	
July 13-17	Overnight: July 10-11	
July 20-24	Acteens Camp: July 24-26	

### Spring Senior Adult Rallies

**March 30, West Jackson Baptist Church, Tupelo**  
**9:00 a.m. - Noon (no lunch—no cost)**

**Personalities:** Mickey Dalrymple, humorist from Columbus  
**Music choirs from** FBC, Booneville and Harrisburg Baptist Church, Tupelo; and the men's quartet from Calvary Baptist Church, Tupelo  
**Call Charles Stubblefield at 601-489-8048 for more information.**

**April 21, Lake Tiak O'Khata, Louisville**  
**9 a.m. with lunch**

**Personalities:** Paul Blanchard, Louisville; Charles Moody, Louisville; **Music by** East End Baptist Church, Columbus

**April 23, FBC, Eupora**  
**9 a.m. with lunch**

**Personalities:** James Bryant, Eupora; Larry Kennedy, William Carey College; **Music by** FBC, Verona  
**Call Bill Stewart at 601-258-3491 for more information.**

**April 23, FBC, McComb**  
**9:00 a.m. with lunch**

**Personalities:** "Cross Country," Petal; Odean Puckett, Jackson  
**Music by** FBC, Hazlehurst  
**Call Talmadge Smith at 601-833-8111 for more information.**

**April 23, Jefferson Davis/Covington Association**  
**Family Life Center, Collins**  
**9 a.m. with lunch**

**Personalities:** John McCall, Clinton; **Music by** R.L. and Beth Sigrest, Yazoo City; "String of Pearls," Visionaries, FBC, Hattiesburg  
**Call Ken Stringer at 601-765-6683 for more information.**

**June 1, Tunica Community Center, Tunica**  
**10 a.m. with lunch**

**Personalities:** John Bewley with magic; Pam Bell, Bogaloussa, La.  
**the Shows Family, Ridgeland**  
**Call MC Johnson at 601-627-3417 for more information.**

### International Family Rally

**Saturday, April 4, 1998**

**Woodland Hills Baptist Church, Jackson**  
**3327 Old Canton Road**

**featuring Bassam Chedid**

**Free Admission**

#### Purpose

The rally is to enlighten and equip the local churches to reach and minister to internationals in their communities.

**For more information, call Glenn Shows at 1-800-748-1651.**



Lord, Help Me  
Bee  
All You  
Want  
Me To Bee



"...Only to  
be what  
He wants  
me to be,  
Ev'ry  
moment of  
ev'ry day."

## Mississippi Baptist Secretaries Conference

April 13-14, 1998  
Camp Garaywa  
Clinton, Miss.



For more information or a registration  
brochure, call Anne Martin at  
1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800, ext. 305.

## 1998 State Young Musicians' Camps



### Gulfshore Baptist Assembly June 26-30

#### Guest Conductor:

Steve Roddy  
Director of Houston Children's Chorus  
Houston, Tex.

*Special Feature: Houston Children's Chorus  
will perform Friday evening.*

*Register on or after March 1, 1998 through  
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly.*

### Blue Mountain College July 20-24

#### Guest Conductor:

Don Odom  
Assistant Professor of Voice  
Florida Baptist Theological College  
Graceville, Fla.

*Register on or after March 1, 1998 through  
the Church Music Department.*



For more information, call the Church Music Department  
at 1-800-748-1651.

Don't Miss Out On This  
Special Opportunity to Make  
Some Wonderful Memories!



Begins Friday at 5 p.m. and ends Saturday at noon.

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daughter's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
In case of emergency contact/phone number \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Church Name \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$23 x No. of persons \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (total)

Make checks payable to: Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
Mail to: WMU GA Father/Daughter Overnight, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530



Pray this day for...

March 27-April 9, 1998

Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

### Watch and Pray

Watch your thoughts: they become words.

Watch your words: they become actions.

Watch your actions: they become habits.

Watch your habits: they become character.

Watch your character: it becomes your destiny.

- Frank Outlaw

At least 95% of the Native American population has not been reached with the Gospel. Pray for Native American people to come to know Christ as Savior and Lord. There is much bondage among Native Americans to traditional religions, alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide, broken homes, and economic depression.

In 1998, the Bolivian Baptist Union will celebrate 100 years of ministry in Bolivia. The anniversary celebration will be held in Oruro on April 16-19. Pray that preparations will lead to a truly spiritual and inspirational event.

Russian lawmakers voted by a two-to-one margin to sharply restrict pornography. Since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, sex-related goods and services have greatly proliferated in Russia. Praise God for efforts to establish moral order in Russia.

Missionaries John and Kathy Vaughn in Brazil asked us to pray for a couple who prayed to receive Christ several months ago. They have not become active in church or followed through with baptism.

Praise the Lord that the Christian Church in Bagdad, Iraq, has grown from 250 members to 1200 members. One Christian leader there notes that 50 Christians are employed in Saddam's palace because he can trust them.

Thank you for praying for the 16 pastors and leaders from western Nicaragua who have just completed the Experiencing God study led by missionary Jim Palmer. They felt this was so valuable that they plan to continue meeting each week and to form an association of churches in the area.

Thank the Lord that many prisoners get saved. In Los Olmos prison in Argentina more than 3,000 inmates have been born again. The officials have dropped the number of guards at the prison from 300 to 30.

In January missionary Skip Martin and a local pastor started a weekly Bible study for cadets at the Police Academy in Guatemala City. On Feb. 23, there were 325 cadets that gathered to hear the Word of God. Please pray for the continued discipleship of the new Christians wherever they may end up working.

In February, the Minister of Public Works in Spain ordered the closure of all evangelical radio stations known as "Radio Amistad" (Friendship Radio). Seventeen radio stations that transmit the gospel 24 hours a day were shut down. Pray that the gospel will have free access to the airways in Spain.

A Vietnamese pastor is going blind. No ophthalmologists have agreed to go to Vietnam to treat him, so the possibility of having him go to Singapore for medical care is being explored. Pray that this faithful Baptist pastor will be granted a visa and that arrangements for travel and medical treatment will fall into place.

Young Musicians State Festival Adjudication; FBC, Clinton; sponsored by Church Music Department. Youth Leadership Lab/Christian Performing Arts Festival; FBC, Richland; sponsored by Discipleship Training & Family Ministry. Leadership Training Conference; Gulfshore Assembly; sponsored by the Student Work Dept.

Young Musicians State Choral Festival; Mississippi College; sponsored by Church Music Department. Church Weekday Education Clinic; FBC, Jackson; sponsored by Discipleship and Family Ministry.

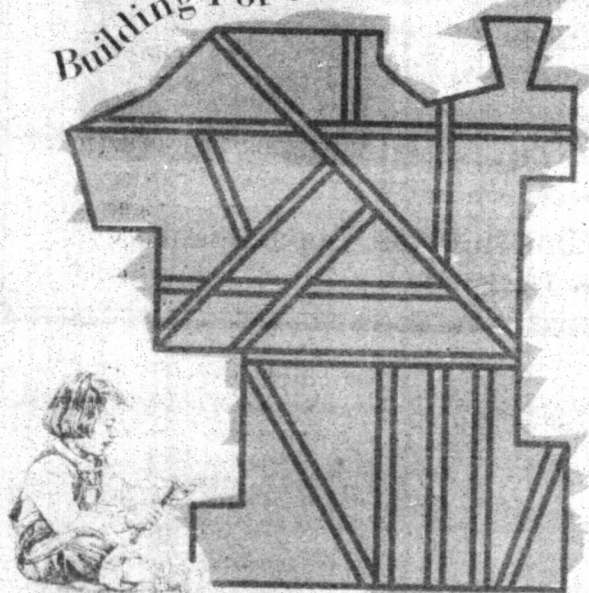
28

International Family Enrichment; Woodland Hills BC, Jackson; sponsored by the Equipping Team. Pray for the granting of work permits for missionary personnel in Kenya.

3

Vacation Bible School Clinics; FBC, Tupelo/FBC, Brandon/Petal-Harvey BC, Petal; sponsored by the Sunday School Dept. Missionary Steve Hicks, who serves as a professor at the Mexican Baptist Seminary, has taken an emergency furlough to seek medical treatment for some health problems.

Building For the 21st Century



Preschool/Children Leadership Festival

## A Conference for Reaching and Teaching Future Generations

Trinity Baptist Church  
Southaven, Mississippi  
May 1-2, 1998

Registration begins 3 p.m. Friday  
Program concludes Saturday, 12:15 p.m.

Program fee: \$12.50  
Catfish dinner Friday night: \$6

A ministry of  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
and Tennessee Baptist Convention

For more information, call the Sunday School  
Department at 1-800-748-1651.

### SCHEDULE

#### Friday, May 1, 1998

- 3:00 p.m. Registration begins
- 3:30 p.m. Early Bird Shift
- 4:30 p.m. Early Bird Shift
- 5:00 p.m. Supper begins
- 6:30 p.m. "Ground Breaking"
- 7:00 p.m. "Foreman's Report" -  
Willa Ruth Garlow
- 8:15 p.m. Tool and Trade Show  
Tool Show: 12 interactive  
booths on Preschool and  
Children Activities  
Trade Show: Baptist Book  
Store plus vendors to aid  
in your ministry.
- 9:15 p.m. Show's Over

#### Saturday, May 2, 1998

- 7:30 p.m. Early Bird Shift
- 8:45 p.m. 2nd Shift
- 10:00 p.m. 3rd Shift
- 11:15 p.m. 4th Shift
- 12:15 p.m. Quittin' Time

Program fee: \$12.50

Catfish dinner Friday night: \$6

There will be six conference periods (shifts) with  
a total of 25 conferences for Preschool, Children,  
and Weekday teachers, and staff.

### RESERVATION REQUESTS PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN LEADERSHIP FESTIVAL MAY 1-2, 1998

#### Individual Request

Mr., Mrs., Miss \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

#### Church Group Request

Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee: \$12.50 each  
Total Reservations for Program Fee:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Number  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Amount

Catfish Dinner  
Carriage Hills Baptist Church, Southaven  
Friday, 5-6:15 p.m.  
Catfish Dinner: \$6 each  
Total Reservations for Catfish Dinner:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Number  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Amount

Registration deadline: April 15, 1998

Space limited to 1,000 persons

No refund after April 15, 1998

Make checks payable to:

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Mail to:

Linda Reeves, MBCB

P. O. Box 530

Jackson, MS 39205-0530

Confirmation letter will contain:

Maps to Trinity Baptist Church, and Carriage Hills  
Baptist Church, and a listing of hotels.

# HOUSE TOPS



## SEEKING CHRISTIAN HOME

Editor,

I am a Southern Baptist representative to Jordan and have been here for just over a year. A Jordanian woman who graduated from Carson-Newman College in Tenn. has taught in the Baptist schools of Jordan and is now the kindergarten principal.

Her oldest son, an American citizen, is attending Hinds Community College in Ray-

mond and is the Baptist Student Union president. Her youngest son Wassim, also an American citizen, is 16 years old.

We are hoping to assist her in finding Wassim a home for the completion of high school, near his older brother in Mississippi.

If you are interested in helping a fellow believer in the readjustment of her son to America, we will be glad to share further details.

Wassim is a well-mannered

boy with good grades and a close walk with the Lord. He plays the piano for all the services that he can attend (the government here has school on Sundays).

If we were able to help we would be more than happy to have him in our home.

Our e-mail address is mgreen@NETS.com.jo, internet. We trust God has a home where Wassim would be welcomed.

Morgan Green  
Ajoun, Jordan

## PK IS HODGEPODGE

Editor:

My letter is prompted by your editorial titled "The Place for Spiritual Reconciliation" in the March 12 edition concerning the controversial Promise Keepers (PK) Movement.

Promise Keepers is an ecumenical hodgepodge, for it brings together under one umbrella churches, ministries, and individuals for the purpose of promoting unity through the ecumenical incorporation of all churches and denominations regardless of sound doctrine.

This leads to compromise which on the surface appears to bring success but actually in the aftermath generates confusion.

The PK movement ignores the fact that churches, denominations, and ministries are not the church but may only contain the church for as Matt. 18-20 says, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

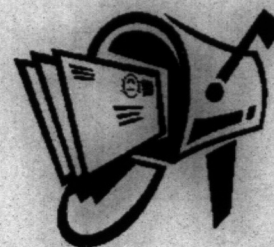
PK assumes that the breaking of the "denominational barriers" produces a "demonstration of biblical unity." This is not found in Scripture.

A church that wants to obey the Word must not jump on the PK bandwagon. If a Bible-believing church joins with those who promote error — and PK not only accepts error but promotes it — then that assembly and all who are associated with it are identified with that same error.

In these days of spiritual and moral confusion, we are thankful that God has given us his eternal, inspired, infallible, inerrant word as a complete and sure foundation which can never be shaken.

Whenever God's orders are disobeyed, the end result is disaster no matter how promising the initial results may appear to be.

Bennett Blanton  
Houston



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

## JUST FOR THE RECORD



**Highland Church, Tishomingo Association**, held dedication services for its new fellowship hall on Feb. 20. Pictured (from left) are Stanley McAnally, chairman of deacons; Phillip Blunt; Tim Blunt; Bobby Cobb, director of missions; Bobby Johnson, pastor; Mark Daily; and Doyle Hopkins.

A block party will be held at **Eastside Church, Pearl**, March 28, 2-5 p.m. For more information, call (601) 939-2433.

**Eureka Church, Rankin County**, honored its pastor, A. J. Stewart, and his wife Margaret, on their 50th wedding anniversary with a reception following the morning service on Feb. 1.

**Daryl G. Bennett**, pastor of East Valley Baptist Church, Flagstaff, Ariz., for 10 years,

will be the special speaker on Mar. 29, at 11 a.m., for Senior Adult Emphasis at Terry Road Church, Jackson. James Netherland, music director, will be in charge of the music program. A covered dish luncheon will be held at noon.

The music and drama ministry of **Leesburg Church, Morton**, will present "Alone on the Altar ... Calvary's Lamb," April 3 and 4 at 7 p.m. and April 5 at 8 p.m. For reser-

ventions or further information call the church office at (601) 854-5306.

**First Church, Pearl**, will present its annual Passion Play entitled "The Power of His Love" on April 4 and 5 at 7 p.m. The presentation includes Easter music and drama. Free tickets are required for seating and are available through the church offices. Call (601) 939-4476 for tickets and information.

## STAFF CHANGES

**Fairview Church, Indianola**, has called **Stacey Blake** as pastor. He is a recent graduate of Southwestern Seminary. He is also a graduate of Belmont University, Nashville, Tenn. Blake has served as associate pastor/minister of music and youth at several churches in East Mississippi as well as Georgia.

**Cason Church, Nettleton**, has called **Tony Summerford** to lead its music ministry, effective Feb. 1. He has served Smithville Church as assistant music director for several years and sings with the Messengers.



Summerford

**Calvary Church, Durant**, has called **Willie Bishop** as pastor. He is currently living in Kosciusko.

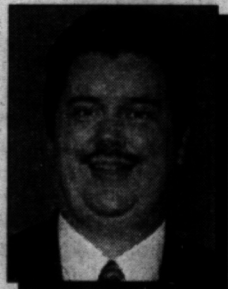
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**Antioch Church, Holmes County**, has called **Mike O'Brien** as pastor effective March 8.

**David Fortenberry** has accepted the pastorate at First Church, Amite, La., effective Jan. 1. A native of Magnolia, Fortenberry received his education at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS). He is currently continuing his education at NOBTS. His previous place of service was Gum Grove Church, Lincoln Association. He may be reached at (504) 748-7135 (work) or 748-9009 (home).



Fortenberry

**Parkway Church, Houston**, has called **Gregg Thomas** as pastor effective March 20. His previous place of service was Handsboro Church, Gulfport. Originally from the Tupelo area, Thomas is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and Luther Rice Seminary.

## Correction

A photograph of **Scott Rogers**, new associate pastor of Belden Church, Lee Association, was incorrectly identified on page six of the March 12 issue, due to an editing error.



Rogers



# Land: racism still alive in culture, churches

## Morality March set for March 28

A group called Together Encouraging America back to Morality (TEAM) will hold a "Bringing Down the Walls" statewide march at the New Capitol in Jackson beginning at 1 p.m. on March 28, for the purpose of calling for a return to morality in America.

Crystal Springs Mayor Dan M. Gibson, who is spearheading TEAM, said 10,000 participants is the goal for the March 28 event.

"TEAM volunteers (have spent) two months calling people all over this state to ask them to march seven times around this Capitol, so we can bring down the walls of immorality in Mississippi. This is just the beginning; eventually marches will be happening all over this great state.

"TEAM's mission is to encourage all people to reclaim morality in America by starting a grass-roots revival for morality in our homes, schools, churches, and businesses — a revival which will in time revolutionize our government and restore our land," Gibson said.

For more information, contact Gibson at (601) 892-1210.

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Though civil rights for all were established by law some 30 years ago in the United States, "most white Americans have no idea how racist America still is," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and the man who led the SBC in 1995 to publicly apologize for their discrimination.

Land addressed the need for a continued emphasis on racial reconciliation during an academic workshop on Baptist distinctives at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) March 16-20.

"Racism hurts everyone involved," Land said. "Racism victimizes those it oppresses and racism shrivels the souls of those who are the perpetrators."

Formerly pastor of New Orleans' Vieux Carre Church in 1970, "the only church I knew of at that time in New Orleans that would accept African Americans as members," Land said if Southern Baptists are going to do much toward evangelizing the world — most of which is not white — "we're going to have to learn from our African American brothers and sisters how to do it."

"If we're going to have truly multiethnic churches, we need to educate our churches on the subject of racial reconciliation," said Land, who graduated from New

Orleans Seminary in 1972 with the master of theology degree. "We are going to have to do color-blind evangelism and win people of color to Jesus."

"Pastors must embrace it and must train their deacons to embrace it."

Noting the justice finally brought in Mississippi to the three-decade-old murder case of Medgar Evers, Land said racial discrimination is still unfortunately very much alive among some Southern Baptists, "primarily concentrated in the Deep South and in rural areas across the South."

In some of those Southern Baptist churches, Land said, "if you scratch a little bit, you won't just find a racist, you'll find a Grand Dragon."

As a recent example, Land gave an account of "a church about 15 miles outside of Wake Forest, N.C.," where Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Seminary, and his wife, Dorothy, were members until the church refused to allow African Americans to worship.

"The pastor had witnessed to some African Americans in the community and of course invited them to come to church the next Sunday morning," Land said.

However, some deacons protested having the African

Americans worshipping there.

Patterson and his wife left the church, declaring publicly, "I will not be a member of a church that does not allow African Americans to worship or be members."

Several members of the NOBTS academic workshop class said they knew others or themselves had been fired from SBC churches in the South within the past few years for inviting African Americans and encouraging them to become members.

Land said Martin Luther King Jr. addressed this problem, calling white pastors to "push the envelope as far as you can without getting fired, because you will be replaced by someone less committed to the cause than you are."

"We must continue to bear witness to the fact the God loves us all," Land said. "We must continue to preach the Word without fear and continue to make a clear case that a racist view is sub-biblical."

Most African-Americans today either have been or have known someone personally who has been discriminated against in recent years, he said, and while most white Americans see a police officer coming their way and are reassured, many African Americans see a police officer and see a threat.

Southern Baptists must notice these inequities, Land said.

"We must learn from the past and not be crippled by it. In many ways our forefathers were great men, but they had a huge blind spot," Land said, admitting that his great-great-grandfather was once a slave owner.

"We need to acknowledge that blind spot and we need to apologize and move to initiate reconciliation."

"We must continue to dialogue," said Land, who hosts a live call-in talk show, "For Faith and Family," broadcast weekly on nearly 200 Christian radio stations.

Careful to say he did not want to underestimate the problem of racial discrimination, Land said, "some real progress has been made," noting "virtually all church growth in recent years among Southern Baptists in the Northeast has been non-Anglo, multi-ethnic."

Land's class on Baptist distinctives included studying the Baptist Faith and Message, a statement adopted by the SBC in 1963.

"There is not a sentence, not a phrase, in the Baptist Faith and Message that is not a Baptist distinctive," he said.

Other topics in the class included religious liberty, separation of church and state, and the development of a unique Southern Baptist theological foundation.

## CBF sets Spring Gathering for April 4

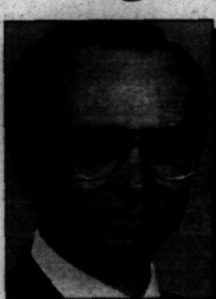
"Seeing Visions, Dreaming Dreams," is the theme of the 1998 Spring Gathering of the Mississippi Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) April 4 at Lake Tiak O'Khata near Lousiville.

Larry M. Taylor, pastor of Emmanuel Church, Alexandria, La., and Charles Poole, pastor of Northminster Church, Jackson, are the featured speakers. David Bishop, minister of music at First Church, Meridian, will provide the music program.

Taylor holds Th.D. and M.Div. degrees from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and a B.A. Degree from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkansas.

He is the author of "In Christ's Name: A Spiritual Journey in Bible Study."

Poole holds D.D. and B.A. degrees from Mercer University in Georgia, and the M. Div. degree from Southeastern



Taylor



Poole

Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. He is the author of "The Tug of Home," "Is Life Fair?" and "Don't Cry Past Tuesday."

Registration will begin at 9 a.m. on April 4, followed by fellowship and worship with Taylor at 10 a.m. The choir of First Church, Meridian, will perform at the worship service.

Lunch will be served at 12 noon. A business and reports session will begin at 1 p.m., followed by a special address by Poole. The meeting will be adjourned at 3 p.m.

Cost is \$7.50 per person, which includes lunch. No child care will be available.

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# Graham seeks to clarify Clinton comments

WASHINGTON (BP) — Less than two weeks after Billy Graham said in a nationally televised interview President Clinton "has such a tremendous personality that I think the ladies just go wild over him," the renowned evangelist reaffirmed in a New York Times opinion piece leaders should be held to a higher standard of personal behavior.

Graham's March 17 commentary in The Times contrasted somewhat with an earlier interview he did for the NBC "Today" show.

That appearance, in which Graham lamented the president's temptations and pressures, brought a sharp rebuke of the world's leading evangelist for the last half-century from columnist Cal Thomas, an evangelical Christian newspaper columnist and speaker.

In his commentary for The Times, Graham, 79, wrote people "entrusted with leadership — whatever their field — bear a special responsibility to uphold the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct, both publicly and privately."

Should personal character be ignored as long as a leader is doing his job? No, Graham said, "because the stakes are

too high and the impact on society too far-reaching.

"A leader's moral character, first of all, influences the way he or she does his or her job. There simply is no such thing as an impenetrable fire wall between what we do privately and what we do publicly," Graham wrote.

"Can someone who consistently lies or deceives or cheats in his personal life be trusted in a business deal or a courtroom or a political agreement? — Of course not.

"A leader's moral character also influences those who look up to him or her — particularly young people. The moral meltdown in our country in part results from a failure of leadership."

In a March 5 interview with Katie Couric on "Today," Graham said he would forgive Clinton if he is guilty of the accusations made against him.

"I forgive him," Graham told Couric, "because I know the frailty of human nature, and I know how hard it is — and especially a strong, vigorous young man like he is. And he has such a tremendous personality that I think the ladies just go wild over him."

A president "should attempt, with God's help, to have a higher moral standard than, perhaps, the average public has," said Graham, who also said he forgave former President Nixon. "But ... we're living in a whole different world today, and the pressure on anybody today is very difficult."

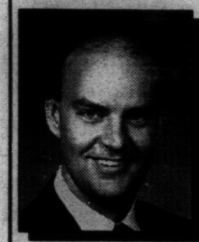
Of that comment, Thomas said in his March 11 column in The Washington Times, "Try this line on your wife if she catches you in a compromising position with another woman: 'Honey, you know what difficult times we live in. Even Billy Graham says so.'"

Graham "used to decry cultural decline in sermons that reminded people of the consequences of sin," Thomas wrote. "In the biblical story of the

woman taken in adultery, Jesus tells her to 'go and sin no more.' Mr. Clinton could take Mr. Graham's forgiveness (which is really absolution) and see it as permission to go and sin some more.

"I've known Billy Graham for nearly 30 years and have written of his supreme integri-

ty," Thomas said. "Now that he is in the twilight of his life, at age 79, and suffering from Parkinson's disease, perhaps he and all preachers should impose a moratorium on schmoozing with presidents and focus solely on building the kingdom of God, which is not of this world."



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*I have a past sin that keeps bothering me. I am no longer acting on "it," but "it" haunts me day and night. What can I do to get over this and not let "it" consume my every thought?*

I am thankful first for Max Lucado's book, *In the Grip of Grace*, and for Barbara, our church librarian, who helped me find the book.

In his book, Lucado brings this issue to heart in the two chapters, "Sufficient Grace," and "The Civil War of the Soul." He uses Rom. 7:7-25 and 1 Cor. 12:7-10 as references in answering questions like yours.

Paul, in these two passages, gives us a clear understanding that sin is "waging," "seizing," and "at work" within us. The "it" in your life is common to all of us. We may all have a different "it," but "it" is sin. In 1 Corinthians, Paul refers to his "thorn in the flesh." I wonder what "it" may have been.

The solution Paul gives and that I find helpful is found in Rom. 7:24-25. "Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God Jesus Christ our Lord."

1 Cor. 12:9-10 states, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness... That is why, for

Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

The way to breaking the power of the "it" in your life is to focus on the person of Jesus Christ. Someone who is bigger than you or me and who will gladly walk with you through your struggles. He knows a little about struggles!

*My husband certainly hasn't lived up to my expectations. My career is soaring, and he's happy with the same menial work. How can I motivate him?*

Motivate him to do what? Could it be that he is really happy and content with where he is in life?

The problem here is the expectations. You had dreams in one direction and he obviously had dreams in another.

Talk about your expectations. Is he lazy? Is he good to you? Does he love you? Is he there for you? Does it bother him that your career is soaring? If these are not problems for him, what good will it do for them to be a problem for you?

Encourage your husband in the things he is good at doing. Look for the good and affirm him. He may change — or you just might be the one to change.



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Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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## 10 respond to God's call

CLOVIS, N.M. (BP) — While God is calling people to the ministry across the Southern Baptist Convention, 10 in one year is an unusually high number to be called out of one church.

"I have got a church full of young preachers," said Tom Rush, pastor of First Church, Clovis, N.M., where 10 men have surrendered to the ministry in the past year.

Most of those God has called have been, currently or in the past, associated with nearby Cannon Air Force Base.

The church has been reaching many people on the base since Rush became pastor three years ago. Since military personnel are reassigned from time to time, many of the men who have surrendered to the ministry have already moved to new places of service.

# Former Miss. pastor warns of doctrinal loss

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP and local reports) — The doctrinal turnaround resulting from the conservative resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention "will be lost" unless the widespread affirmation of biblical inerrancy is coupled with a reform in Southern Baptist preaching, an Oklahoma pastor told students and faculty at Southern Seminary March 10.

Alan Day, pastor of First Church, Edmond, Okla., and former pastor of First Church, McComb, preached to the Louisville, Ky., chapel audience from Acts 24:24-26 on the Apostle Paul's confrontation with corrupt political leader Felix and his wife Drusilla.

"I'm disturbed that after the 'Battle for the Bible,' after the war to make our denomination safe for orthodoxy, after we've won the right to use the words 'inerrant' and 'infallible' in polite company, and after we've established, for this generation at least, that we believe the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord — that nevertheless across our convention, even in the pulpits of some who ballyhoo inerrancy and infallibility and orthodoxy, we see being employed a secular methodology, a secular ecclesiology, and a preaching that very little oftentimes resembles the faith once for all delivered to the saints," Day thundered.

"Our contemporary denominational reform, I believe, is not complete with a mere reaffirmation of the Scripture and its authority," he added. "There must be reform of our preaching or the gains of the past 20 years will be lost."

Contrasting the God-centered message of Paul in the first chapter of Ephesians with weekly sermons sounding forth from contemporary pulpits, Day suggested too many preachers, including some conservative evangelicals, mimic poll-driven politicians by capitulating to an often anti-theological and increasingly self-absorbed sentiment in the pews.

Even with the debate over biblical authority settled, man-centered preaching which dethrones theology in favor of anthropology is regular fare in far too many Southern Baptist churches, Day said.

"If there ever was a time, and I think there was, when Southern Baptist preaching was God-centered, I don't think it's today," he asserted.

Southern Baptist preaching also can fall prey to a needs-driven agenda which seeks to enlist faddish sociological and psychological rhetoric in order to meet the "felt needs" of hearers, Day noted.

Day said he found no biblical warrant for "culturally captive" methodology which devises "success and how-to ser-

mons that are supposed to be hooks to get people in to hear the deeper-message" at the expense of the Scripture's witness to its own sufficiency in calling sinners to Christ.

Day also targeted a success-oriented model of ministry which feeds on numbers and budgets while reinterpreting the role of the pastor as that of a corporate executive, along with those within the church-growth movement who target "those who drive BMWs, not those who drive beat-up Chevys."

"Young men here today who are pastors and preachers, your primary responsibility is not to fill your church. Your primary responsibility is to fill your pulpit," Day counseled.

"We all believe that God's purpose is to reach people for Christ and our goal is to reach as many as we can, but never should methodology supersede the content of a message. We have come dangerously close to that and many times we have done that."

Day charged the seminarians not to shirk their duty to preach, as did Paul on the reality of God's wrath and the certainty of his coming judgment on unbelievers.

"When those who do not know Jesus Christ, who have never been made righteous by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, will be forever separated from a holy God, that is an awful thought," Day said.

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## LIFE AND WORK

## Zacchaeus: a change in values

Luke 19:1-10

By Jim Burnett

Today, we as a country are embroiled in a costly cultural war. Relative truth and situational ethics are practiced, causing many to doubt the validity of God's word.

Christian values are being replaced at break-neck speed. Abortion is in; equal rights for homosexuals and lesbians are becoming law. We must get back to letting the Word of God change us instead of us attempting to change the Word of God.

In today's lesson, we will see how a personal relationship with Jesus Christ can bring a major value shift to our lives. It certainly did for Zacchaeus.

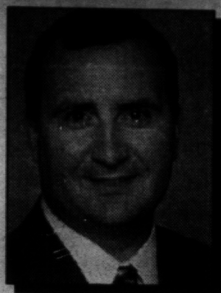
**Resolution (1-4).** Zacchaeus, like Levi, was a wealthy but spiritually impoverished man.

His career as a hated tax collector left him longing for something his money could not produce.

His spiritual hunger manifested itself through curiosity and motivated him to shimmy up a tree for a better look at Jesus.

People today continue to look for Jesus. They attempt to find him through religion, church attendance, reading the latest best-selling spiritual books, through a practice of good deeds, by studying their horoscopes, and even by consulting psychics.

They may not admit they're searching for Christ, but nevertheless they are. Within their spirits is an inner void that cannot be sated until a personal relationship with Jesus is formed.



Burnett

Let us not be too quick to judge the curious, for they like Zacchaeus may be one step from accepting the Lord.

**Reception (5-7).** Can you hear the murmuring of the crowd? They are irate at the thought of Jesus visiting the home of a sinner.

Yet Jesus' love for Zacchaeus was stronger than his desire for the crowd's approval. He didn't put any stock in opinion polls or majority rule as so many do today. Rather his energies and efforts were invested in saving and salvaging the lost and misguided.

Jesus continues today receiving the Zacchaeuses of the world no matter what their backgrounds or dark pasts. No one is beyond God's saving grace.

But that's not Satan's message. He has some believing they've crossed the point of no return. They've been too filthy for too long.

We must correct this heresy and tell those victimized by these lies that Jesus' arms are outstretched and ready to receive the penitent. He greatly desires to live in your home and heart and will upon your invitation.

**Recognition (19:8a).** What was it that caused this little man, Zacchaeus, to receive Christ this day?

Was it because Jesus took the time to stop at the tree Zacchaeus was perched in and personally invite him to lunch? Was it the unconditional love Zacchaeus heard and saw in the voice and eyes of Jesus?

We can only speculate, but one thing is for sure: Zacchaeus' values changed drastically. Have yours? Do your morals and actions reflect the lordship of Christ? This should be a question we answer daily.

**Restitution (19:8b).** Zacchaeus' desire and commitment to repay those he had cheated was evidence of his conversion, for giving money away is not the habit of an IRS man.

When a person is genuinely converted, it affects, as someone has said, his pocketbook, wallet, checkbook, and calendar book. This was certainly true with Zacchaeus.

From where did Zacchaeus come up with the suggested payback amount? Perhaps he was familiar with some of restitution laws found in the word of God (Ex. 22:1; Lev. 6:5; Num. 5:6-7; 2 Sam. 12:6).

**Redemption (19:9-10).** Jesus' declaration that salvation had come to Zacchaeus' home highlights the influence of a father on his family.

A whole family became Abraham's spiritual offspring and passed from judgment into life as they individually trusted Christ as lord and savior.

Jesus accomplished his mission this day as he led Zacchaeus and his family into a personal relationship with God. He continues this redemption mission today through his church.

Burnett is pastor of Raymond Road Church, Jackson.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Were you there?

Mark 14:44, 45, 55-56, 71-72; 15:9-15

By Harold W. Simmons

During the trial of O.J. Simpson, I listened intently to the evidence presented and found myself being wishy-washy on the issue of guilt or innocence.

I watched lawyers pose questions in such a fashion as to manipulate the truth to the advantage of the questioning side. It appeared the lawyers were not interested in the truth, except as it presented some personal advantage.

Many of the personalities in this scripture lesson approach the truth in the same fashion.

**Selling out (14: 44).** Judas was a person who would do

anything to get what he wanted. He possessed information that the Jewish leaders wanted.

What they wanted was the opportunity to capture Jesus away from the public view and without a crowd in which he might "get lost" as he had once before as they attempted to kill Jesus.

Information is power. Judas could provide the needed intelligence. At this point, Judas could be considered a very powerful person.

Judas had the power to disclose where Jesus would be and how to identify him. He had the power to cause Jesus'



Simmons

destruction or, as some believe, Judas had the power to force Jesus' hand to begin the kingdom as Judas saw it.

Regardless of his motive, Judas used his power to the detriment of Jesus and for his own personal gain.

**Liar, liar (14: 55-56).** In these verses we are again faced with the use of power.

The court system had the power to make sure that the truth prevailed. The only thing that the court wanted was to hear testimony or "evidence" that supported their personal agenda.

They did not care if the evidence received was a lie. It was within the power of the court to ensure veracity, but the reported concern of the court appeared to be that the liars agree in their lies.

**Am not! (14:71-72)** Cursing

and swearing has always been an effort to add power to the speech of mankind.

In Peter's case, it was an effort on his part to be believable to his hearers. I believe that Peter felt that his life was in jeopardy, and that fear prompted his outburst of foul language. Because of the threat, Peter wanted to appear to be something that he was not.

When the opossum is threatened, he will try to appear to be dead until the threat disappears. Peter tried to appear to be anything but a disciple of Jesus. When the threat had gone, he wept at his actions.

**Accusation (15: 9-13).** Someone has said that if you repeat a lie long enough, it will be believed as the truth.

The priests had done that very thing. They talked a lie long enough that the people believed that it would be better to have a known violent criminal

loose in their community than to allow Jesus to live.

Jesus had to be accused of something that posed a common threat to all the people and that threat would be treason and inciting treason.

**Condemnation (15: 14-15).** Once again, fear had come to be the force that moved people to do things they would regret.

Pilate made two mistakes. One was the sentence of death for Jesus and the other was the release of Barabbas.

Pilate went along to get along. As Peter had done, Pilate turned his mind from the truth for his own personal security.

**God speaks to us:** I believe the Lord is teaching us that the misuse of force, leverage, or power against others for our own benefit is just as sinful as the sins committed against Jesus at his arrest, trials and condemnation.

Simmons is pastor of Hebron Church, Grenada.

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

## Challenging our commitment

Mark 8:27-9:1

By Grace Graham

**The challenge of recognition (8: 27-30).** The first half of Mark's gospel climaxes with the confession of Jesus as the Christ. Peter provided Jesus with an opportunity to make the disciples understand the nature of his role as the suffering Son of Man.

Jesus and his followers had been among great crowds. He led them into remote villages to have time alone with them.

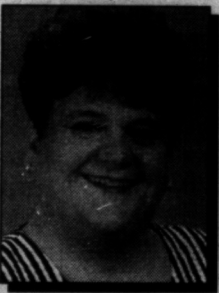
As they traveled, Jesus asked a question which began to open their eyes to his true identity. "Who do men say that I am?" Their responses indicated that there was some speculation about his identity.

The disciples answered, John the Baptist and Elijah. To use these names at

least indicated Messianic excitement. Elijah was expected to prepare the way for the Messiah and John claimed to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3-4.

Jesus realized this was the answer most people gave. So he gave a different emphasis to the same question. "Who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "you are the Christ." Jesus accepted this title, but didn't use it himself and was not ready for the disciples to use it either.

Why was this so? Possibly at this stage none of them, including Peter, understood what the



Graham

Messiahship involved. If these close friends of Jesus did not understand, surely those outside could not yet understand.

**The challenge of faith (8:31-33).** These verses include the first of three occasions on which Jesus carefully explained to the disciples the meaning and cost of Messiahship.

Mark 9:31 and 10:33 tell that Jesus gradually gave a fuller picture as the disciples grew in understanding.

Jesus plainly told that he would be rejected by the religious leadership, killed, and after three days, would rise again.

Peter could not understand. Maybe because the picture of the Son of Man given in Daniel 7:13-18 is a victorious character. How could Jesus give himself this title and then warn them of his suffering?

Jesus wanted them to under-

stand that his kingdom must not be established by military force or by human effort, but by his loyalty and obedience to God. Even today such a submission to God's will brings suspicion, threat, anger, or retaliation.

Peter did not seem to understand the need for Jesus to go to the cross and responded using his natural mind rather than thinking in divine terms.

**The challenge of commitment (8:34 - 9:1).** Jesus taught, that being his follower requires a commitment involving all that one is or has. Why was it important that Peter grasp the conditions of Messiahship? If he could not, how could he grasp the conditions of discipleship to apply to himself?

We, too, are called to make the difficult choice of discipleship. There are two prerequisites for discipleship.

The first is, "let him deny himself." This idea is to disown one's sins and to turn away

from self-centeredness.

How might one repent? Imagine yourself walking toward a certain point. This point represents sin. To repent you would recognize that you are going the wrong way and turn around. You've turned your back on sin and head toward God.

The second requirement is to "take up his cross." The victim of crucifixion had to carry his own cross to the place of execution. To take up one's cross requires complete commitment, even to death. God expects that we willingly accept "death to self." The divine paradox is that spiritual life can only be found by dying to self.

Have you turned from your sin and walked toward God? Have you put God's ways ahead of your self-centered ways? Examine today the validity of your commitment to Christ.

Graham is Childhood Education Director at First Church, Gulfport.



# Mississippian to chair NOBTS trustees

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — William A. Hanberry, a retired commercial contractor from Hattiesburg, Miss., was elected March 11 as the new chairman of the board of trustees at New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS).



**PRAYER OF SUPPORT** — New Orleans Seminary president Chuck Kelley (kneeling at right) prays with the new officers of the seminary's board of trustees on March 11 at the end of the three-day annual spring meeting of trustees. New officers are (seated, left to right) Ron Jackson, vice chairman, pastor of East Gaffney Baptist Church, Gaffney, S.C.; William Hanberry, chairman, retired commercial contractor, Hattiesburg, Miss.; and Michael Claunch, secretary-treasurer, pastor of First Church, Slidell, La. (Photo by Debbie Moore, NOBTS Office of Public Relations)

charges and salary information were included in the 1998-99 budget adopted by trustees. The seminary operates on an Aug. 1 to July 31 fiscal year.

The new budget is a 3.04% increase over the current year's budget and will be the largest budget in the history of the seminary. The increase includes a 2% increase for permanent staff salaries and a 3% increase for faculty salaries.

In the 1998-99 academic year, the seminary will move from a matriculation fee to a tuition-per-hour charge, as at least three of the other six SBC seminaries.

For on-campus classes, undergraduate students will pay \$100 per hour and graduate students will pay \$125 per hour, with a maximum payment of \$1,050 per semester.

For off-campus classes, undergraduate students will pay \$105 per hour and graduate students will pay \$130 per hour, with a maximum payment of \$1,150 per semester.

In the seminary's doctoral programs, D. Min. students will pay \$220 per hour and

other doctoral students will pay \$1,250 per semester for the first four years and \$1,500 per semester after the fourth year.

Non-Southern Baptist students will pay double tuition. All fees are in line with those charged at the other six SBC seminaries.

Two new faculty members were elected. Endel Lee, pastor of First Church, Roanoke, Texas, will be an instructor in preaching for the College of Undergraduate Studies.

Charles Harvey Jr. will be assistant professor of Christian education and associate director of the new D. Min. program. Harvey has been the seminary's director of continuing education since June 1997, a position he will retain.

In other business, trustees: ● promoted David M. Howard Jr. to full professor of Old Testament and Hebrew.

● approved an agreement with the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg relating to a reciprocal agreement similar to one established two years ago with Louisiana State University for the accep-

tance of hours for students in the joint master of arts in Christian education and master of social work program.

● ratified action by the seminary's foundation board which met March 9.

● approved sabbatical leave for Don Stewart, professor of ministry development; for Paula Stringer, associate professor of childhood education; for Joe Trull, professor of Christian ethics; for Argile Smith, J.D. Grey associate professor of preaching; for Asa Sphar, associate professor of psychology and counseling, as well as preliminary sabbatical proposals for Gerald Wright, Chester L. Quarles, associate professor of missions, and Rick Byargeon, J. Wash Watts associate professor of Old Testament and Hebrew.

● heard reports on student evangelistic efforts from Chuck Register, director of the seminary's Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Growth, who reported 723 professions of faith since January 1997 as students led people to Christ through work on academic class projects.

## NOBTS to stay put in current location

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Trustees of New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) voted unanimously March 11 for the 80-year-old seminary "to remain in its present location" rather than build a new campus somewhere else in the greater New Orleans area.

The vote came after the presentation of results from a two-year study by an ad hoc committee called "Vision New Orleans," established in March 1996 by the seminary's then newly elected president, Chuck Kelley.

Trustees unanimously accepted all five recommendations from the Vision New Orleans committee. Besides the recommendation not to move, trustees voted for the seminary to:

◆ prepare a new master plan for the future of the campus, accommodating technological developments for education in the 21st century.

◆ expand campus on the eastern side to Press Drive as funds and property become available.

◆ renovate the campus with a view toward remaining permanently at the current location.

◆ develop strategies to address the major concerns expressed in the Vision New Orleans survey.

The "major concerns" surfaced through extensive surveys done by one of the committee workgroups. This group, convened by Randy Millwood, NOBTS assistant professor of Christian education, surveyed a broad range of the seminary constituency — faculty, staff, current main campus students, current extension center students, spouses of students, prospective students, and alumni — questioning their "perceived greatest strengths and weaknesses of the seminary," Millwood said.

Millwood emphasized his workgroup measured "29 perceptions," as opposed to facts about the seminary campus and the city of New Orleans. In addition, Millwood said his workgroup "carefully analyzed numerous cross-sections" of the nearly 2,746 people surveyed.

Ironically, "only minor concerns" surfaced among those who currently live or have lived in New Orleans, Millwood said.

"Consistently, the only group with major concerns were extension center students. 'Extension center students tended to view more facts of living in New Orleans in a negative light when

compared to New Orleans campus students."

Therefore, the committee recommended "marketing the benefits of living in New Orleans, including the consistently declining crime rates, the improving economic conditions and the culture of the city, including numerous and expanding family friendly entertainment possibilities."

Two years ago, "many of us approached the Vision New Orleans committee assignment almost assuming we would have to move," Cooper said. "As we proceeded with our work, through our study and research, there was a real desire to do whatever needed to be done."

"What has taken place was by the spirit of God. We received a reaffirmation and assurance that this is where God put this seminary and this is where God intends for this seminary to continue to be."

"We are not staying because we have to," said trustee chairman Bill Hamm, a retired mechanical contractor from Shreveport, La. "We are staying because we want to."

The Vision New Orleans Committee was composed of 15 people representing a cross-section of the seminary family, Cooper said.

Trustees on the committee were William Hanberry, retired president and owner of real estate and heavy equipment companies in Hattiesburg, Miss.; Rickey Brantley, pastor of Lawrence Drive Baptist Church, Macon, Ga.; Cooper; Hamm; Tony Lambert, pastor of Westside Church, Omaha, Neb.; Idonia Porterfield, a homemaker in Montgomery, Ala.; and Ron Yarbrough, pastor of Warren Church, Indianapolis.

Seminary administrators on the committee were Kelley and Clay Corvin, vice president for business affairs.

Faculty members on the committee were Dennis Cole, chairman of the division of biblical studies, and Millwood.

Two members from the seminary's Foundation Board on Vision New Orleans were Martha Ann Powell, wife of Sen. John William Powell of Liberty, Miss.; and Edward Johnson, pastor of First Church, Ocala, Fla.

Staff representative on the committee was Chris Friedmann, director of campus facilities. The student representative was Brian Cleveland of Bossier City, La.

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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TZO VR ZKW FKZJKQPRO  
WK WXDN GKQSO: VAW  
VR HR WQTZNJKQPRO  
VH WXR QRZRGDZB KJ  
HKAQ PDZO, WXTW HR  
PTH IQKCR GXTW DN  
WXTW BKKO, TZO TFFRI-  
WTVSR, TZO IRQJRFW,  
GDSS KJ BKO.

QKPTZN WGRSCR: W GK

Clue: C=F

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Hebrews Five Five